



The limits to shaping diversity as public culture: Permanent festivities in Barcelona



Ricard Zapata-Barrero ^{*,1}

GRITIM-UPF (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration), Spain
Social and Political Science Department, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Catalonia, Spain

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 12 May 2013

Received in revised form 1 October 2013

Accepted 25 November 2013

Available online 31 December 2013

Keywords:

Diversity

Cultural policy

Barcelona

Immigration

Permanent festivities

ABSTRACT

In spite of the existence of an extensive debate on cultural policies on the one hand, and on local diversity policies on the other hand, there are still few studies dealing directly with this nexus. This emerging research trend will be discussed in the context of Barcelona and through the analysis of a specific cultural policy field: the planning of permanent festivities.

After overviewing its migration history and after presenting the theoretical framework and methodology, this article frames Barcelona's general cultural policy and intercultural policy patterns, arguing that the Catalan capital is really at a very initial stage of connecting diversity with cultural policy. After that, I will defend the argument that, in spite of recognising diversity, the analysis of Barcelona's permanent festivities shows that there are also some limits to the development of this connection, due primarily to a lack of democratization of culture. Interviews and a discussion group confirm this empirical diagnosis. The argument I want to put forward is that this lack of participation of immigrants in cultural planning and diversity promotion is probably due to the fact that the two departments in the city represent, indeed, two approaches toward the question of how to promote the nexus between culture and diversity, and thus they are still working separately. The department of culture still has an elitist focus, centred on a culture of excellence, while the immigration department has a more social focus on cultural diversity.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction: Cultural Policies and the diversity nexus in cities: An emerging debate

"One of the defining factors that will determine, over coming years, which cities flourish and which decline will be the extent to which they allow their diversity to be their asset or their handicap. Whilst national and supra-national bodies will continue to wield an influence, it will increasingly be the choices that cities themselves make which will seal their future" (Council of Europe, 2008; 22). This statement summarises the current European view within which we will frame this article. It comes from one of the founding documents of the Intercultural Cities Network, a joint programme of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, aimed at promoting an intercultural lens for the main city policy-makers (Interculturalcities programme, 2008). Within immigration studies, cities are now recognised as active agents, drawing their own key questions and answers to challenges related

to accommodating diversity (Borkert, Bosswick, Heckmann, & Lüken-Klaßen, 2007; Camponio & Borkert, 2010; Good, 2009; Lüken-Klaßen & Heckmann, 2010; Penninx, Kraal, Martiniello, & Vertovec, 2004). This article seeks to analyze a public policy that up until now has been neglected from the debate on the local management of immigration-related diversity: cultural policies.

In spite of the existence of a large debate on cultural policies on the one hand, and on local diversity policies on the other, there are still few references dealing directly with the nexus of the two (see, among others, the seminal works of Baeker, 2002; Baeker & Cardinal, 2001; Bennett, 2001; Cardinal, 1998; Ghilardi, 2001; Skot-Hansen, 2002). This emergent research trend will be discussed in the context of Barcelona and through the analysis of a specific cultural policy field: planning permanent festivities.

Barcelona is largely the result of past migrations. After overviewing its migration history and after presenting the theoretical framework and methodology, this article frames Barcelona's general cultural policy and intercultural policy patterns, arguing that the Catalan capital is really at a very initial stage of connecting diversity with cultural policy. After that, I will defend the argument that, in spite of recognising diversity, the analysis of Barcelona's permanent festivities shows there are also some limits to the development of this connection, due primarily to a lack of democratization of culture. Interviews and a discussion group confirm

* Address: Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Social and Political Science Department, Ramon Trias Fargas, 25-27, 08005 Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain. Tel.: +34 93 542 19 41/43.

E-mail address: ricard.zapata@upf.edu

URL: <http://dcpis.upf.edu/~ricard-zapata/>

¹ Director of GRITIM-UPF.

this empirical diagnosis. The argument I want to put forward is that this lack of participation of immigrants in cultural planning and diversity promotion is probably due to the fact that the two departments in the city represent, indeed, two approaches toward promoting the nexus between culture and diversity, and thus they are still working separately. The department of culture still has an elitist focus, centred on a culture of excellence, while the immigration department has a more social focus on cultural diversity.

Context and theoretical framework

Barcelona has a long tradition of immigrant reception over the last century. Several migratory waves have reached the capital of Catalonia since the beginning of the 20th century. After the Spanish Civil War (in the 1940s and 1950s), a great number of individuals came to Barcelona from the rest of Spain to escape unemployment. In the 1960s, Barcelona continued receiving immigrants from inside (namely, from Andalusia and Extremadura). However, the most recent migration flow of the two last decades of the previous century has been characterised by some new specificities because immigration came *from outside*. Now, the beginning of the 21st century is characterised by a huge increase in foreign population. In January 2001, only 4.9% (74,019) of the total population was represented by foreigners. Three years later, in 2004, they had almost tripled to 12.8% (202,489). And in 2010, immigrants living in Barcelona had increased up to 17.6% (284,632).² Probably the most important feature of this last wave is the great diversity of nationalities and backgrounds (immigrants from Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, China, Morocco, Senegal, and Pakistan being among the most numerous), and the fact that most of them are young (the average age being 33 years old in 2013, with around 22% under 24, and almost 49% between 25 and 49 years old).³ This change in migratory patterns, and the fact that most are today second-generation (immigrants or Spanish citizens with an immigrant background), invites the city council to consolidate the incorporation of the diversity dimension into its cultural policy agenda.

This article assumes a perspective that is the result of a key premise developed by the diversity advantage debate, coming primarily from urban and management studies (see, among others, Blommaert & Verschuere, 1998; Bloomfield & Bianchini, 2004; Festenstein, 2005; Gundara & Jacobs, 2000; Hussain, Law, & Haq, 2006; Page, 2007; Sze & Powell, 2004; Wood & Landry, 2008; Zachary, 2003; Zapata-Barrero, 2013), and is also assumed for the concept of culture (see, for instance, Bennett, Grossberg, & Morris, 2005; d'Angelo, 2001; Brecknock, 2006; Grossberg, 2010; Mulcahy, 2006). Within this current literature, the argument I want to put forward is that Barcelona's way of connecting its cultural policy with diversity is promoting a new social dynamic we can call a *culture of diversity*, which essentially means going beyond the simple fact that the current contexts of cities are diverse, in order to discuss how diversity is being incorporated into cultural policy, both at the level of institutional structure and routines. It also means regarding diversity as beneficial for social cohesion – as an asset and as a resource for policy engineering – that can actively contribute to promoting cultural projects. This notion is a direct contribution to a concern for the democratization of culture, following a former analysis of cultural policy in Barcelona (see Zapata-Barrero, 2010a). This literature debates the basic ways to develop the social function of culture and to make citizens not simply consumers but active participants in cultural planning and implementation (see, among others, Caune, 2006; Pyykkönen, 2012; Stanley, 2005), by

developing concepts such as cultural citizenship (Andrew, Gattiniger, Sharon, & Straw, 2005; Rosaldo, 1997).

One methodological challenge of this chapter is how to operationalize “culture of diversity” by means of an adequate interpretative framework. This involves, firstly, situating the concept within the policy process, and then defining it using a series of key standards. Theoretically, I have already introduced the notion in several works dealing with cultural policy and intercultural strategy. To summarise this background, the notion is presented as a medium-term purpose of intercultural policy (Zapata-Barrero, 2011; p. 7–9), socialisation being the immediate purpose, and cohesion and social development being the long-term purpose. In such an intermediate position, there are some preconditions for the culture of diversity that have already been identified for the city of Barcelona. Namely, there is the institutional recognition that diversity constitutes a new city context, along with the assumption that diversity is a factor in institutional and social transformation and is a driver for reshaping the city's public culture, given the newly diverse context (Zapata-Barrero, 2011, p.7). From this perspective, a “culture of diversity” is also interpreted as a civic culture. That is, it should be assumed that diversity is itself a culture that should be promoted through an intercultural strategy, influencing knowledge construction and prejudice reduction (Zapata-Barrero, 2010b, p.8) and even serving as a tool to reduce the space of xenophobic discourses (Zapata-Barrero, 2011).

Sources, methodology and main argument

Using the available information from the current practices of Barcelona's City Council regarding permanent festivities, the purpose of this article is to test the interpretative function of the “culture of diversity” notion for understanding the process of incorporating diversity into cultural policies in Barcelona. In this way, the article also contributes to a growing concern for the democratisation of culture in diversity settings. I will focus on the promotion and the structural and institutional preconditions for fostering a culture of diversity. To complete the task of interpretation, I will follow a multidimensional framework with three key standards, coming from the aforementioned literature:

- (1) *Diversity recognition*: used to understand the presence of diversity as a frame of reference and a driver of permanent festivities. This assumes the incorporation of different categories of diversity (culture, language, religion, etc.) in any cultural promotion.
- (2) *Diversity participation*: used to see if immigrants have the means to participate in cultural planning and in the implementation of permanent festivities.
- (3) *Diversity management*: used to analyse whether there is a structural framework in the city that mirrors the conceptual nexus between cultural policy and immigrant-related diversity policies.

Taking these three standards as drivers for the interpretation of documents and interviews, we will challenge the council's sole concern for an elitist focus on a so-called “culture of excellence”. These three standards also follow the premise that collaboration and institutional co-operation are more appropriate ways to gain interaction and cultural exchange than dialogue.

In order to assess the culture/diversity nexus following these three standards, we have first analysed the foundational documents drafted by the Culture Institute of Barcelona (ICUB) and the immigration programmes framing the policies of the immigration department.⁴ The basic reading of these documents has been twofold: first,

² See data statistics in the following website: <http://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/catala/dades/inf/pobest/pobest10/pobest10.pdf> [18 November 2013].

³ Departament de Estadística de Barcelona (2013).

⁴ See the entire documents in the institutional bibliography, Barcelona City Council (1996, 1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2006, 2010, 2013).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1008389>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1008389>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)